



BASKETBALL | C1

NEXT STEP

Several area boys and girls teams advance to this week's AHSAA regional tournaments



LOCAL | B1

'LONG LIVE JALEN'

Students gather to pay respect to slain Holt basketball player Jalen Merriweather

The Tuscaloosa News

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Deadly shooting at Florida school

At least 17 people killed; 19-year-old suspect in custody

The Associated Press

PARKLAND, Fla. — A former student opened fire at a Florida high school Wednesday, killing at least 17 people and sending scores of students fleeing into the streets in the nation's deadliest school shooting since a gunman attacked an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut.

The shooter, who was equipped with a gas mask and smoke grenades, set off a fire alarm to draw students out

of their classrooms shortly before the school day ended, officials said.

Authorities offered no immediate details on the 19-year-old suspect or any possible motive, except to say that he had been expelled for disciplinary reasons.

Frantic parents rushed to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School to find SWAT team members and ambulances surrounding the campus. Live footage showed emergency workers who appeared to be treating the wounded on sidewalks.

"It is a horrific situation," said Robert Runcie,

superintendent of the school district in Parkland, about an hour's drive north of Miami. "It is a horrible day for us."

The suspect was taken into custody without a fight about an hour after he left the scene. He had at least one rifle and multiple magazines, authorities said.

"It's catastrophic. There really are no words," Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel said on Twitter.

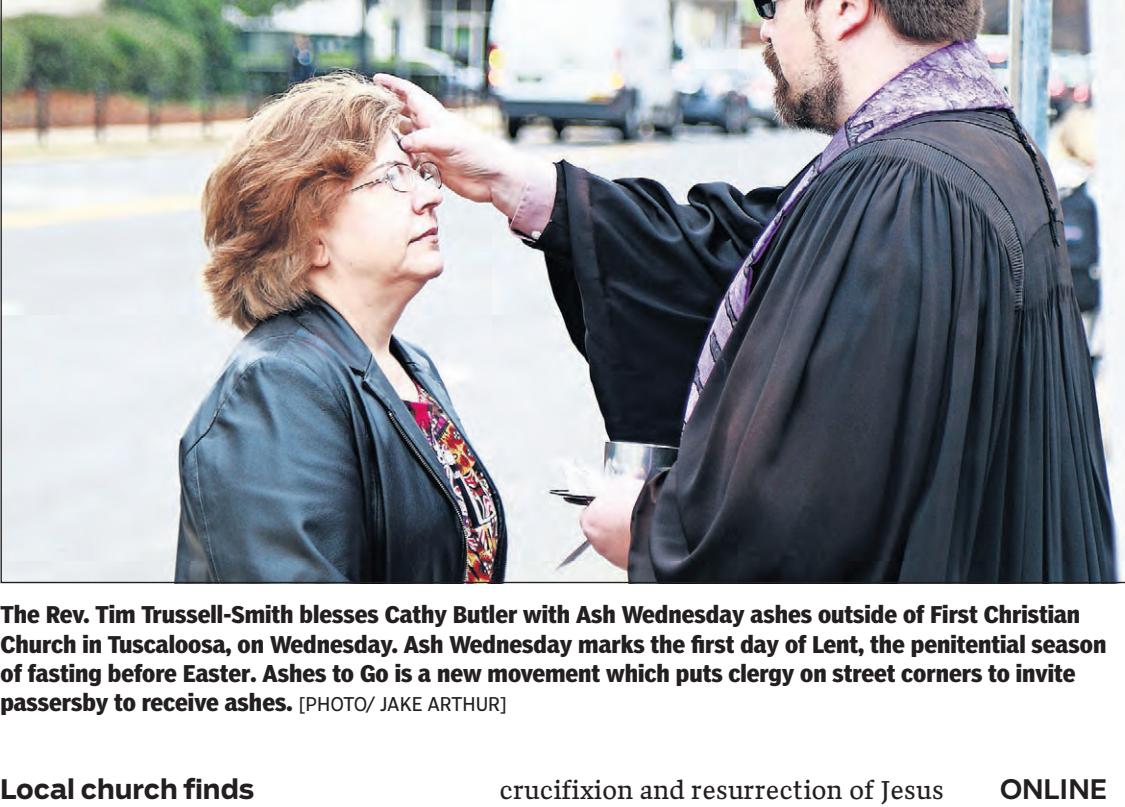
The attacker used the fire alarm "so the kids would come pouring out of the classrooms into the hall," Sen. Bill Nelson

See SHOOTING, A5



Students released from a lockdown embrace following a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, Wednesday. [THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

ASHES TO GO



The Rev. Tim Trussell-Smith blesses Cathy Butler with Ash Wednesday ashes outside of First Christian Church in Tuscaloosa, on Wednesday. Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent, the penitential season of fasting before Easter. Ashes to Go is a new movement which puts clergy on street corners to invite passersby to receive ashes. [PHOTO/ JAKE ARTHUR]

Local church finds innovative way to celebrate Ash Wednesday

By Drew Taylor
Staff Writer

The Rev. Tim Trussell-Smith spent most of Wednesday morning at the corner of Paul W. Bryant Drive and Sixth Avenue, waiting as people passed by him.

Trussell-Smith, pastor of First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), occasionally saw a student walk by him. In those moments, he asked a friendly question.

"Good morning," Trussell-Smith said. "Would you like some ashes to go?"

Often, people would either decline his proposition or not acknowledge him at all, but the minister didn't give up.

Like many Christians around the world, Trussell-Smith was recognizing Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, which is often commemorated by smearing powdered ash onto one's forehead in the shape of a cross. The cross symbolizes the story of the

crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as well as a vow of repentance during Lent.

However, Trussell-Smith said he believes the ash can also be a meditation on mortality. In fact, the theme of the ashes is often referred to a passage from Genesis 3:19 "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

"It helps me realize how precious each moment is," he said.

Typically, the receiving of ashes is done during a special Lent church service, often in Catholic Mass. However, Trussell-Smith is part of a growing movement across the country involving "ashes to go," or ministers going outside the church to offer ashes and prayers to those in the community.

"For me, it's wonderful to see people I have never seen before," he said.

After a while, Trussell-Smith connected with Katie Armstrong, a freshman at the University of Alabama. When asked if she would like to receive

See ASHES, A5

ONLINE

For more photos of Rev. Tim Trussell-Smith commemorating Ash Wednesday, go to www.tuscaloosanews.com

TUSK | D1

BIG EXPECTATIONS

"Black Panther" making the leap from Marvel comics to theaters this weekend

'I can now tell my story'

Stormy Daniels, the porn star who alleged Trump affair, speaks out

By Jake Pearson and Jeff Horwitz

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Stormy Daniels, the porn star whom Donald Trump's attorney acknowledges paying \$130,000 just before Election Day, believes she is now free to discuss an alleged sexual encounter with the

man who is now president, her manager told The Associated Press Wednesday.

At the same time, developments in the bizarre case are fueling questions about whether such a payment could violate federal campaign finance laws.

Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, believes that Trump's personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, invalidated a non-disclosure agreement after

See AFFAIR, A5